



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/778,861	02/08/2001	Hiroshi Aoki	086142/0452	6173

22428 7590 10/10/2003

FOLEY AND LARDNER
SUITE 500
3000 K STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

[REDACTED] EXAMINER

FLEMING, FAYE M

[REDACTED] ART UNIT [REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER
3616

DATE MAILED: 10/10/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/778,861	HIROSHI, ET AL
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Faye Fleming	3616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 2,4-8 and 10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 2 and 10 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 4-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ . |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The amendment filed July 22, 2003 has been entered and acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kithil, et al (6,275,146) in view of Aoki (6,366,200).

Kithil, et al discloses a passenger discriminating apparatus comprising a seat weight sensor 9; and a human body proximity sensor 5; means for determining the presence of the passenger on the seat (see Col. 5, lines 18-24) and; wherein the means for determining utilizes an output from the seat weight sensor and an output from the human body proximity sensor. The means for determining is configured to determine that there is no passenger when the output of the seat weight sensor is not more than a first threshold value (see Col. 5, lines 29-33). Kithil teaches when the human body proximity sensor does not detect the proximity of the human body (see Col. 5, lines 29-33 and Table 1). The means of determining apparatus determines that an adult is seated on the seat when the output of the seat weight sensor exceeds the second threshold

value and when the human body proximity sensor does not detect the proximity of the human body (see Col. 5, lines 29-33 and Table 1). The means of determining apparatus determines that a child seat is mounted on the seat when the output of the seat weight sensor exceeds the second threshold value and when the human body proximity sensor does not detect the proximity of the human body (see Col. 5, lines 29-33 and Table 1). Kithil teaches the claimed invention except for means of determining apparatus determines that a child or child seat is on the seat or mounted to the seat when the output of the seat weight sensor exceeds the first threshold value and is not more than the second threshold value. Aoki teaches the method of determining whether a child is seating on a seat when the output of the seat weight sensor exceeds the first threshold value and is not more than the second threshold value (see Col. 2, lines 13-28). Based on the teachings of Aoki, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the apparatus of Kithil to provide a method of determining the presence and the type of object on the seat accurately in order to determine the deployment mode of the airbag during a vehicle crash,

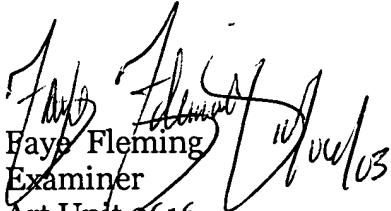
Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 2 and 10 are allowed.
5. Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Faye Fleming whose telephone number is (703) 305-0209. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (9:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (703) 308-2089. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.


Faye Fleming
Examiner
Art Unit 3616